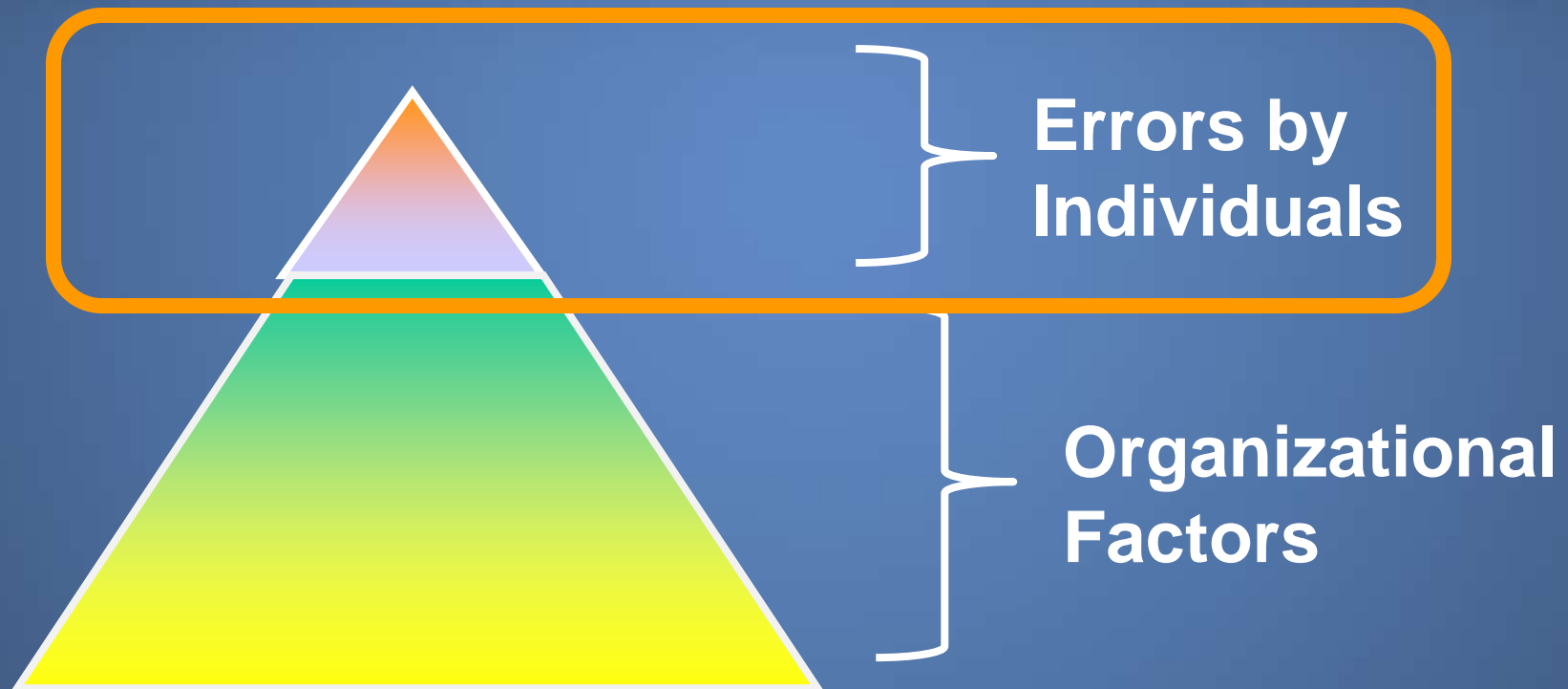


# Lessons from the Ashes: The Critical Role of Safety Leadership



Robert Sumwalt  
September 22, 2016

# Accidents Involve Many Factors





# Lexington, KY

August 2006



**“... the flight crewmembers’ failure to ... identify the airplane’s location on the airport surface during taxi and their failure to cross-check and verify that the airplane was on the correct runway before takeoff.”**



NTSB

Chatsworth, CA. September 2008

**“The Metrolink engineer was aware that he was violating company safety rules when he used his cell phone to make calls or to send and receive text messages while on duty, but he continued the practice nonetheless.”**

An aerial photograph of a Metrolink train yard in Chatsworth, CA, taken in September 2008. The image shows several Metrolink trains parked in tracks. A blue semi-transparent rectangular overlay is placed over the center of the image, containing a quote in yellow text. The quote states that a Metrolink engineer was aware of violating company safety rules by using his cell phone for calls and text messages while on duty, yet he continued this practice. The background image shows the train yard with tracks, platforms, and some buildings. The text "METROLINK" is visible on one of the trains, and "UNION PACIFIC" is visible on a building in the lower right.

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# Buffalo, NY February 2009

**“The captain’s failure to effectively manage the flight ...”**



NTSB

# Munfordville, Kentucky

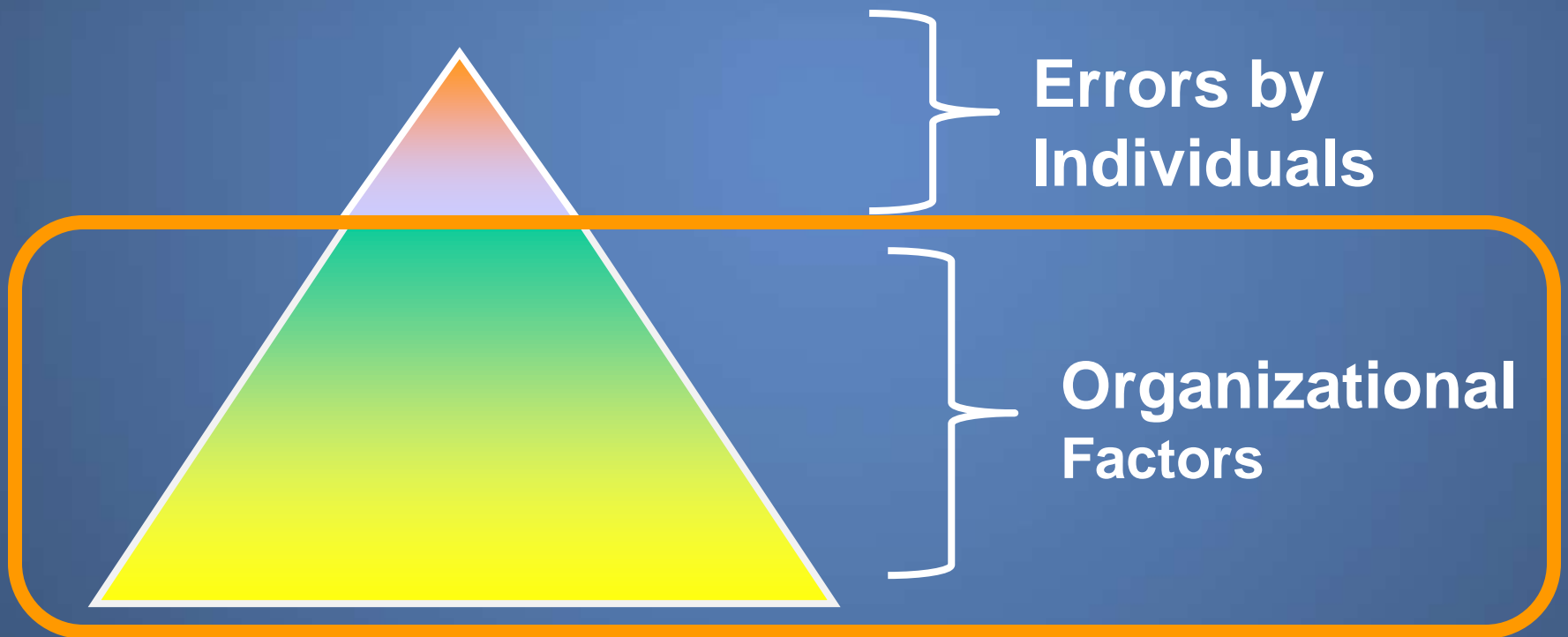
## March 2010

“the truck driver’s failure to maintain control of the truck-tractor combination vehicle because he was distracted by use of his cellular telephone.”



NTSB

# Accidents Involve Many Factors

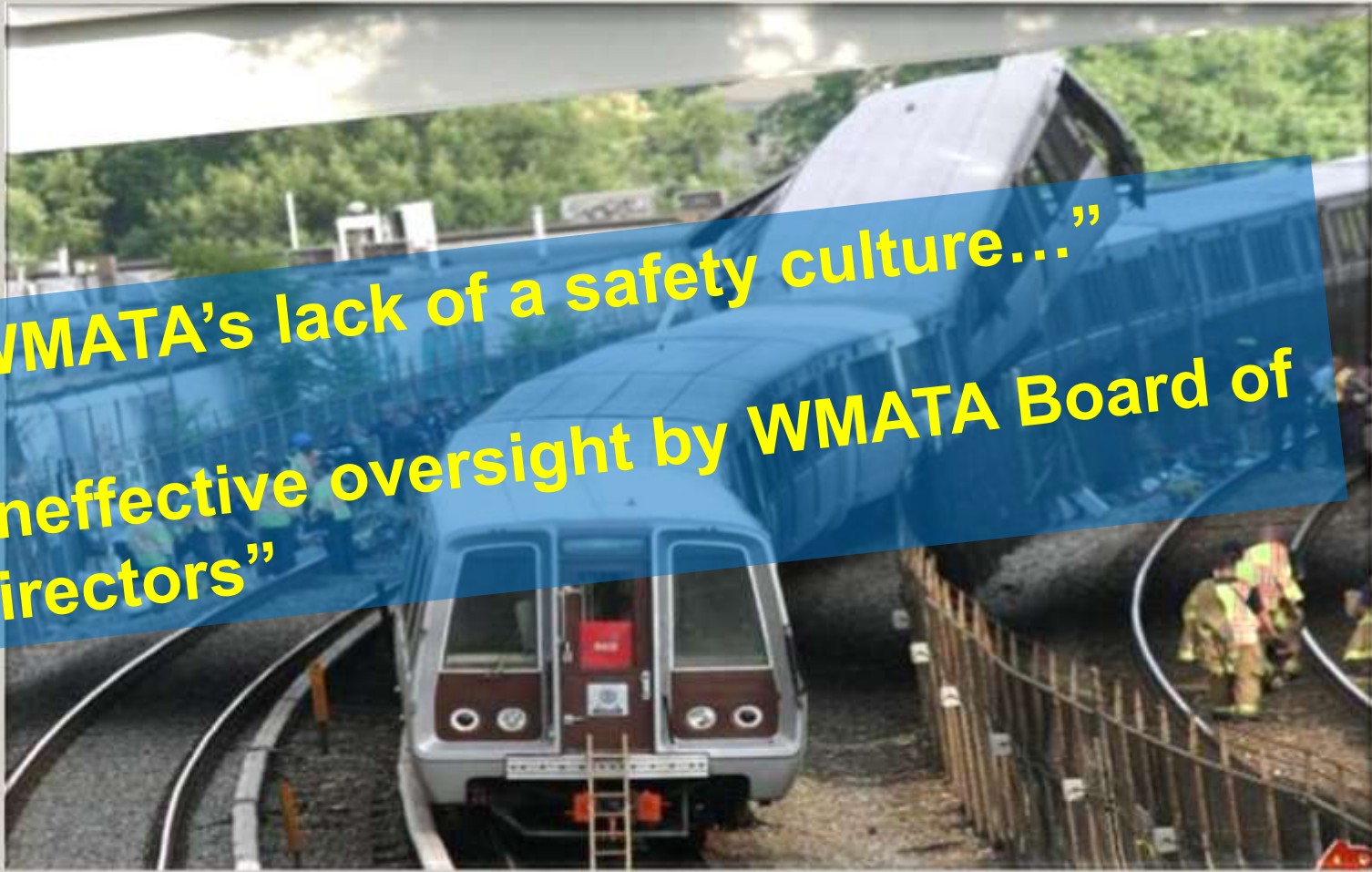




# Washington, DC

## June 2009

**“WMATA’s lack of a safety culture...”**  
**“Ineffective oversight by WMATA Board of Directors”**



NTSB



# Near Santa Fe, NM

## June 2009



**“Contributing to the accident was an organizational culture that prioritized mission execution over aviation safety...”**



NTSB

# Port Arthur, TX

## January 2010



**“Contributing was the lack of oversight by the Jefferson and Orange County Board of Pilot Commissioners.”**



# San Bruno, CA

September 2010



**“The deficiencies identified during this investigation are indicative of an organizational accident.”**

**“The multiple recurring deficiencies in PG&E operational practices indicate a systemic problem.”**



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# Doswell, VA

## May 2011



**“Sky Express, Inc., management failed to follow adequate safety practices and to exercise safety oversight of its drivers.”**



NTSB

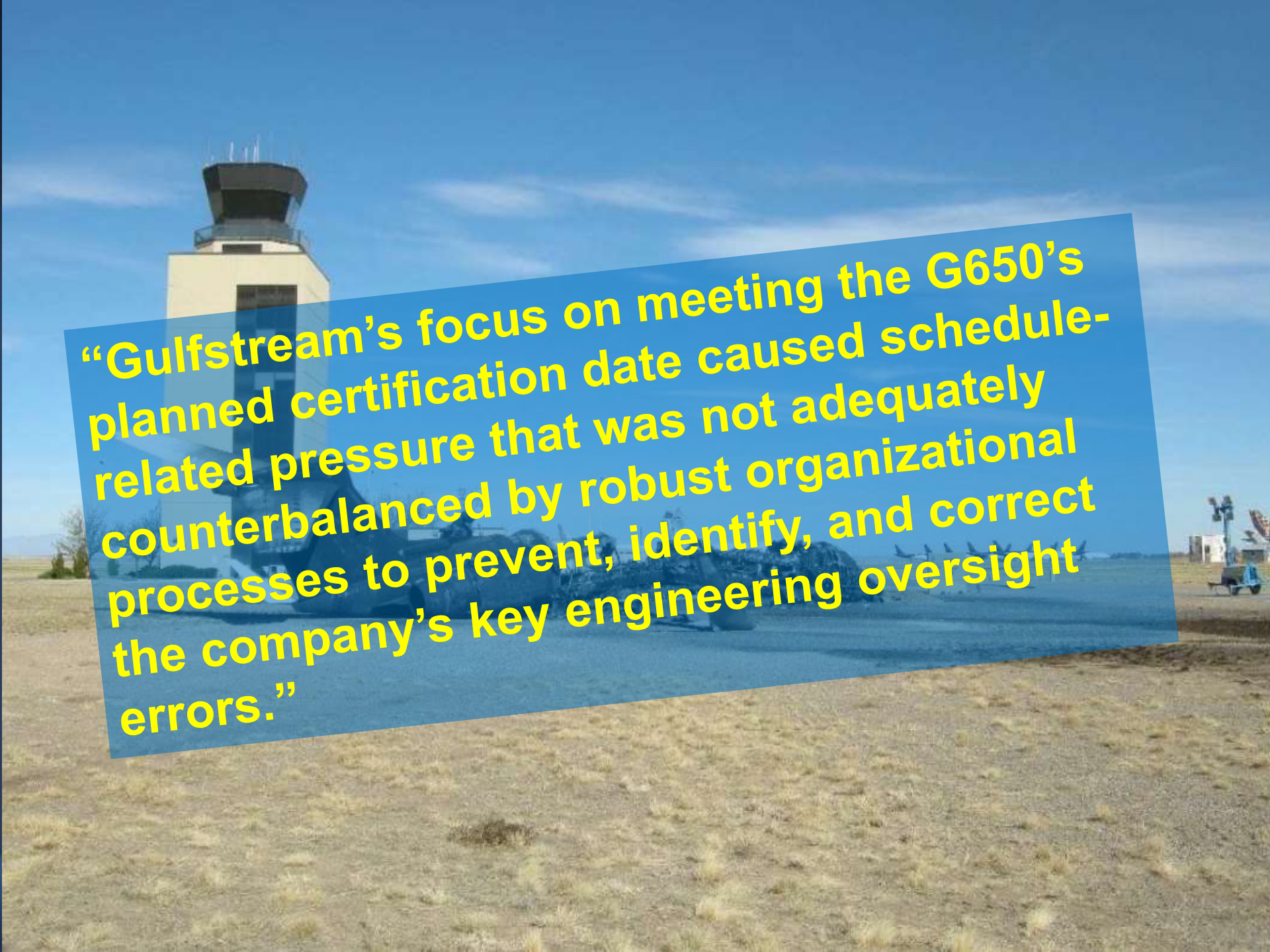


# Roswell, NM

## April 2011



NTSB

The background image shows an air traffic control tower on the left, a clear blue sky with some light clouds, and an airport tarmac on the right with several aircraft parked. The foreground is a dry, grassy field.

**“Gulfstream’s focus on meeting the G650’s planned certification date caused schedule-related pressure that was not adequately counterbalanced by robust organizational processes to prevent, identify, and correct the company’s key engineering oversight errors.”**



# Gulfstream Managers Blamed for Fatal Crash on Test Flight

by Alan Levin

October 11, 2012 — 12:00 AM EDT



■ An artist's rendering of a General Dynamics Corp. Gulfstream G650. Source: Business Wire via Bloomberg

Pressure to speed flight tests of a new model of General Dynamics Corp.'s Gulfstream business jet so it could win U.S. certification for sale was blamed by a U.S. safety agency for crash that killed four employees.

The National Transportation Safety Board yesterday ruled that Gulfstream management was responsible for the accident that sent a G650, which costs \$65 million and has the longest range of any private aircraft, sliding off a Roswell, New Mexico, runway in flames on April 2, 2011.

# Your Company's Management Blamed for Fatal Accident

October 11, 2012 — 12:00 AM EDT



Your company sued for millions. Company declares bankruptcy, ceases operations.

Pressure to speed flight tests of a new model of General Dynamics Corp's Gulfstream business jet so it could win U.S. certification for sale was blamed by a U.S. safety agency for crash that killed four employees.

The National Transportation Safety Board yesterday ruled that Gulfstream management was responsible for the accident that sent a G650, which costs \$45 million and has the longest range of any private aircraft, sliding off a Roswell, New Mexico, runway in flames on April 1, 2011.

## Could this be you?



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**“The best way to predict the future is to create it.”**

**- Peter Drucker**



# Creating a Future of Safety: Three Leadership Questions

1. How strong is our safety culture?
2. Are we really living our values?
3. Are we fooling ourselves?





Creating a Future of Safety

# HOW STRONG IS OUR SAFETY CULTURE?



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# Washington, DC

## June 2009



“WMATA’s lack of a safety culture...”



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# Safety Culture is:

“Safety culture is the core values and behaviors resulting from a collective commitment by leaders and individuals to emphasize safety over competing goals to ensure protection of people and the environment.”

Source: U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission



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**Do you have a good safety culture?**



# Do you have a good safety culture?

- “... it is worth pointing out that if you are convinced that your organization has a good safety culture, you are almost certainly mistaken.”
- “... a safety culture is something that is striven for but rarely attained...”
- “... the process is more important than the product.”
  - James Reason, “Managing the Risks of Organizational Accidents.”

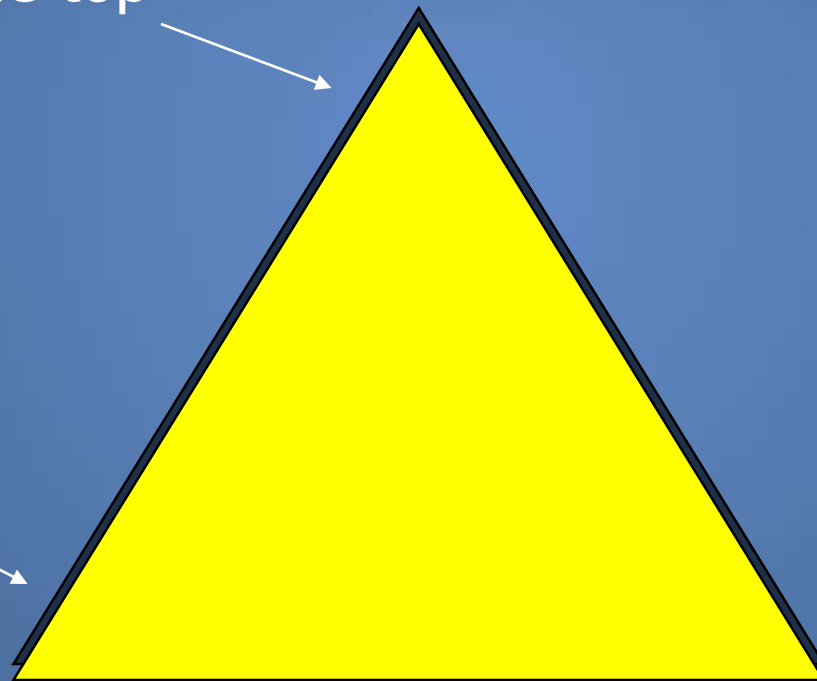




# Safety Culture is:

Triggered at the top

Measured at the  
bottom



Safety culture starts at the top of the organization and permeates the entire organization.

# Sometimes the Message gets Distorted

Safety  
Quality  
Timeliness  
Efficiency  
Honesty & Respect



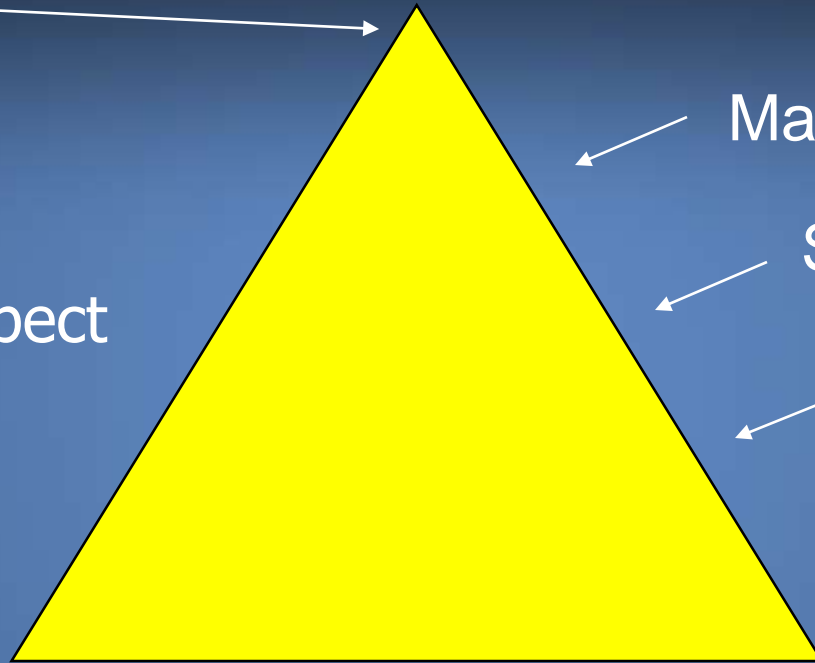
Managers



Supervisors



Coworkers



MOST IMPORTANT – Output!!!!

Cut corners to save money

Fear of retribution

Get job done at all costs

Unfair discipline

Work sucks

Call in sick for extra vacation day



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## WORD OF THE DAY

Thursday, September 22, 2016

align·ment *noun* \ə-'līn-mənt\

Where the leaders and front line employees, and everyone in between, share and practice the same values.



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# Alignment



# How leaders influence safety

“The safety behaviors and attitudes of individuals are influenced by their perceptions and expectations about safety in their work environment, and they pattern their safety behaviors to meet demonstrated priorities of organizational leaders, regardless of stated policies.”

- Dov Zohar, as cited in NTSB accident report

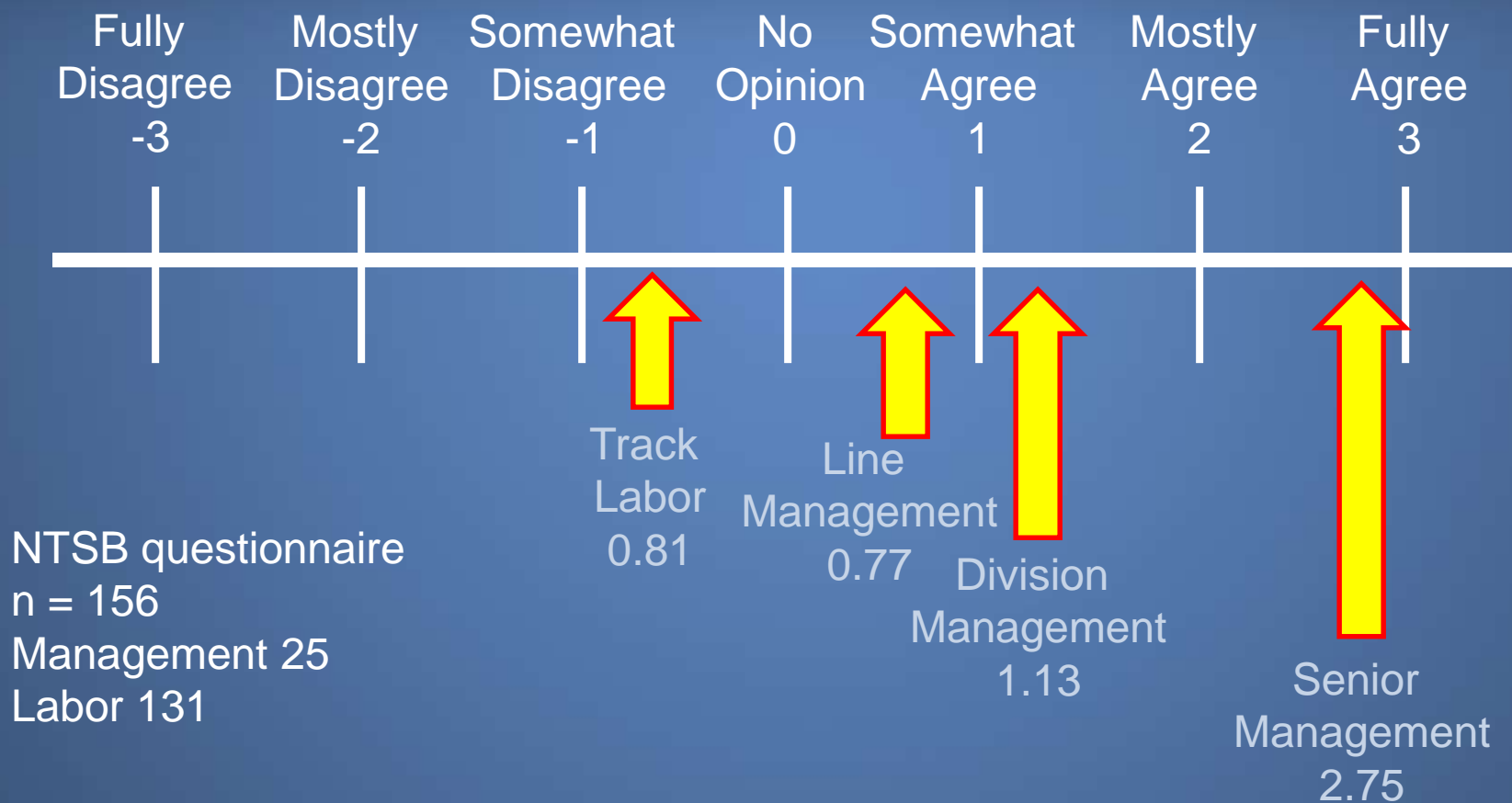
# Metro-North Railroad



NTSB



Metro North management is committed to workplace safety and participates regularly in safety events.



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Management does not pressure staff to maintain service or operations, potentially at cost of safety.



# Employee Comments

- “Sometimes I feel safety is priority one as long as it's convenient.”
- “Metro-North pays lip service to safety. On time performance & budgets take precedence over safety.”
- “The railroad only cares about the on-time performance.”
- “It's all about on-time performance and safety rules are thrown out the window to keep on time performance. Management has no clue.”





Creating a Future of Safety

**ARE WE REALLY LIVING OUR  
VALUES?**



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# Values

- Is safety the top priority of your organization?
- Don't make it a priority – make it a core value.



# Living the Values

- In a successful organization, everything you do is run through the filter of your core values to make sure you are being true to them.
- And, most importantly, you must live those values.





**SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING:**  
Smoking Causes Lung Cancer,  
Heart Disease, Emphysema, And  
May Complicate Pregnancy.



**NTSB**



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# CVS Stops Tobacco Sales

Tobacco Announcement by President and CEO Larry Merlo

This move will cost CVS an estimated  
\$2 BILLION in revenue

“The sale of tobacco products is inconsistent with our purpose – helping people on their path to better health.”

- Larry J. Merlo, CEO, CVS Health



NTSB

“This move is clearly in-line with their stated purpose and values, a move we don’t see often enough today in corporate America. Relying on a strong foundation of values is often what sets market leaders apart from the pack.”

- Michael Woody, Ph.D. for Fox Business



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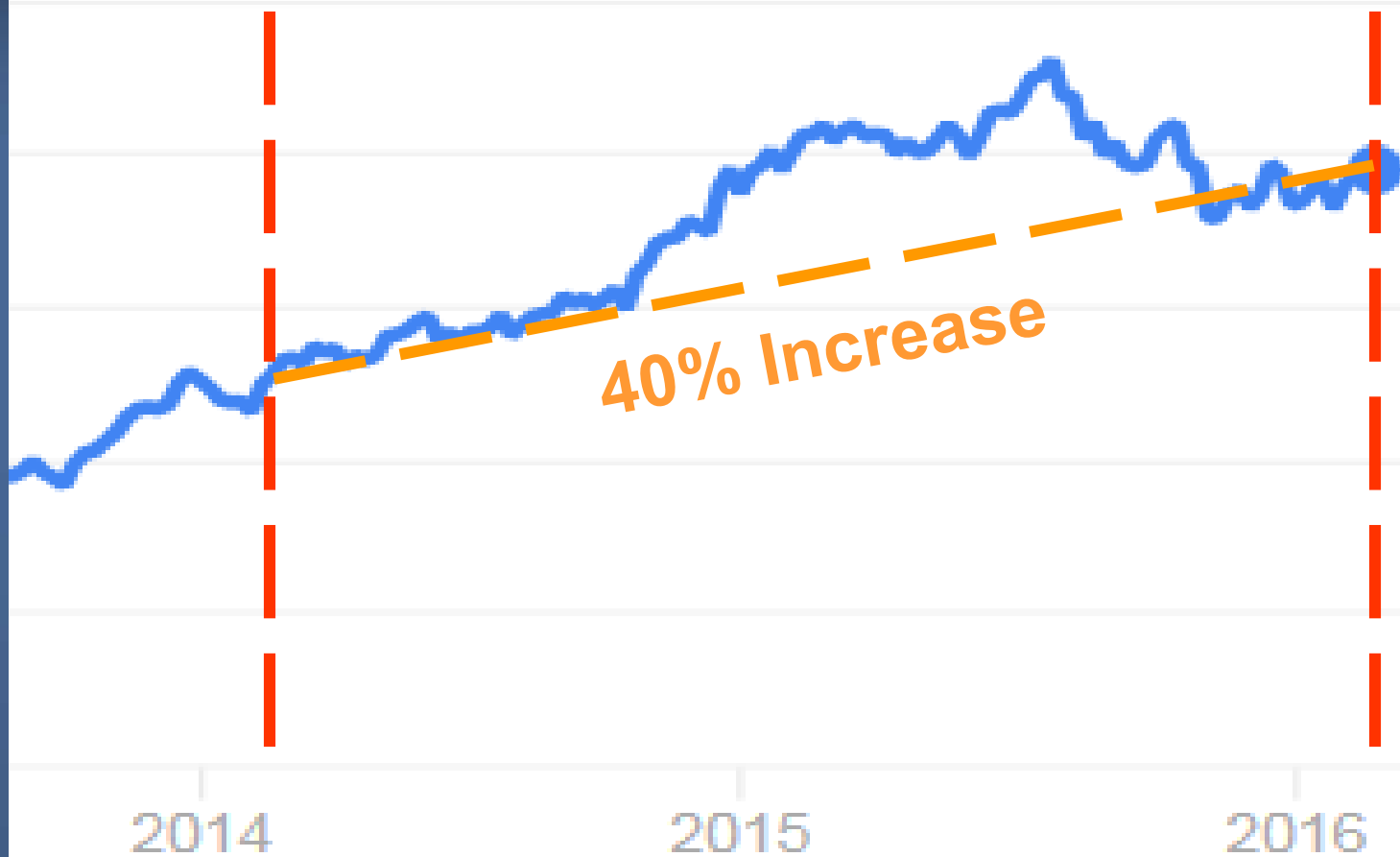
“Think of values as the core guiding principles that act as the foundation of your organization. These principles should guide every decision and serve as your fallback in times of uncertainty.”

- Michael Woody, Ph.D. for Fox Business

# CVS Health Corp

Feb 7, 2014  
\$66.44

Feb 5, 2016  
\$93.10



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Creating a Future of Safety

**ARE WE FOOLING OURSELVES?**



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# An Impressive Operation



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# An Impressive Operation

- Full time crew
- Impeccable maintenance
- High training standards
- Going above minimum standards
- Positive audit comments



# Positive Audit Comments

- “The SMS of this operator is well-developed”
- “Best practices are consistently employed in all facets of the program”
- “Continuous SMS improvement is actively pursued”
- “The Flight Ops Manual is remarkably well-written and comprehensive”
- “Safety culture within the department is shared among all team members”
- “Open reporting of hazards is consistently encouraged by management”
- “Solid safety program, maturing nicely”

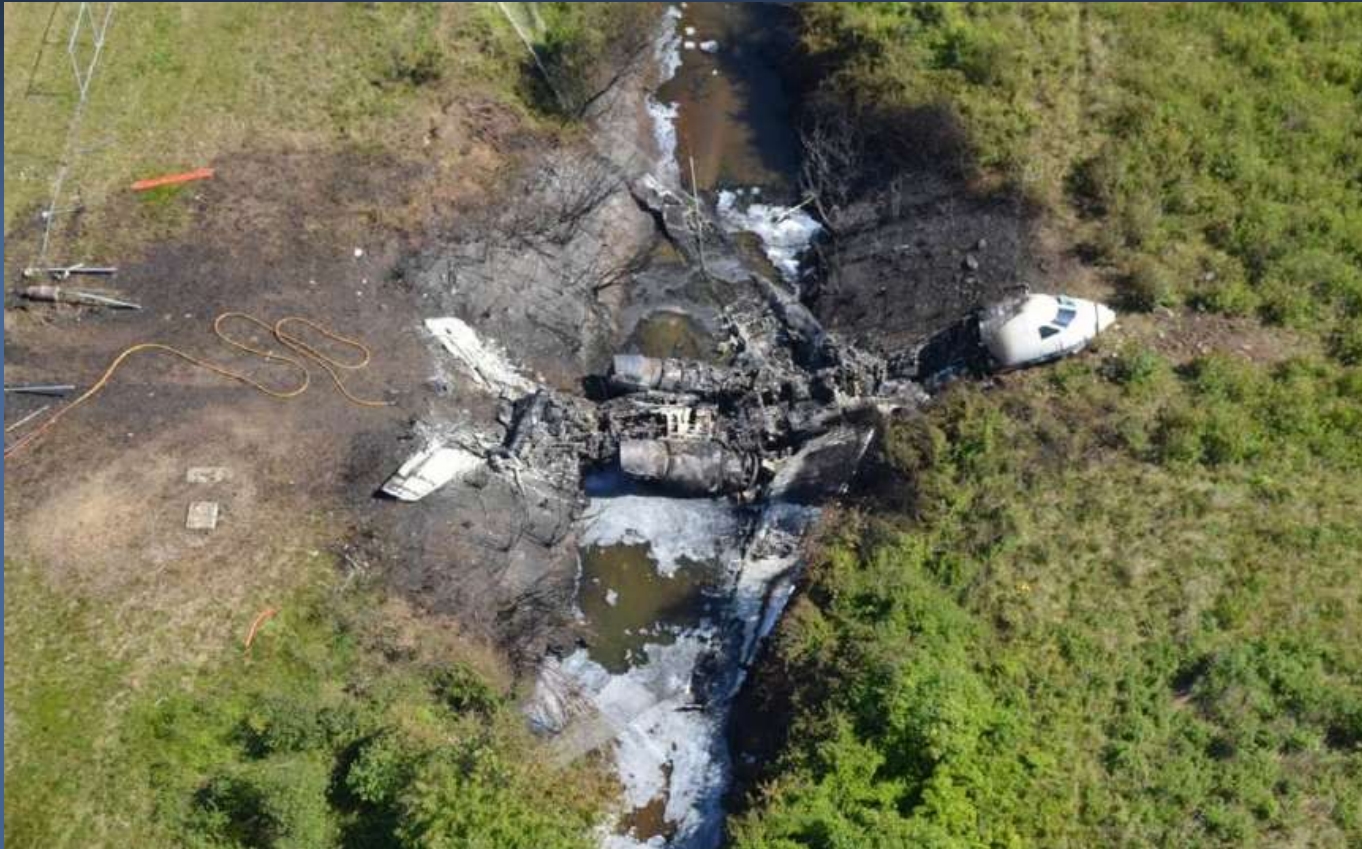


**“You can fool the auditors,  
but never fool yourself.”**

- John Fenton



# And, fool the auditors, they did...



Gulfstream G-IV Crash  
Bedford, MA  
May 31, 2014  
7 Fatalities



NTSB



**And, perhaps they even fooled themselves.**



# Are you on the right track?

**“Even if you're on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there.”**

- Will Rogers



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# “Good can be Bad”

- With good safety performance, people/organizations can easily become complacent.
- Don't ever believe that a lack of accidents means you are “safe.”
- To counter this complacency, there must be a leadership obsession with continuous improvement.

- Courtesy of Jim Schultz



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**“The best way to predict the future is to create it.”**

**- Peter Drucker**





# Creating a Future of Safety: Three Leadership Questions

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# National Transportation Safety Board